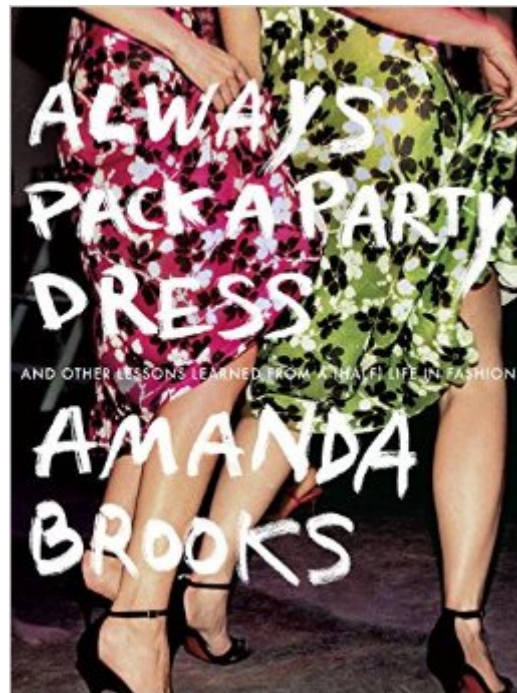


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Always Pack A Party Dress: And Other Lessons Learned From A (Half) Life In Fashion



Synopsis

An authentic voice in the world of style and how-to books, Amanda Brooks, with her unique and enviable yet accessible style, has inspired thousands of women of all ages to find their own personal look and explore their identity through the clothes they love to wear. In the past twenty years Brooks has worked as a photo assistant for Patrick Demarchelier, a *œgallerina* at the Gagosian Gallery, and at various fashion posts, before finding her dream job as fashion director for Barneys New York. Along the way and wearing more than a few of the kinds of outfits we've all regretted at one point or another Brooks has discovered the key to creating her personal style, combining influences as wide-ranging as childhood prep school, Grateful Dead concerts, contemporary artists, pop culture, and her current home outside of the fashion bubble, a farm where she lives with her family (and a host of animals) in England. In *Always Pack a Party Dress*, Brooks recalls her early career aspirations and explores the evolution of her own personal style in stories of successes and failures alike, and offers fashion and beauty tips and inspiring photographs throughout. *Always Pack a Party Dress* is a must-read for high fashion or street style aficionados, and gorgeously produced gift book, Brooks shares her expertise and insider view with warm, candid and often witty prose.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'll start by saying that this book wasn't exactly what I'd expected. With its colorful cover, amusing title, and (somewhat misleading) description, I was expecting something more irreverent and entertaining. Instead, this is a memoir from someone who is really too young to be writing a

memoir. The Good:- Although I wasn't expecting it, Brooks includes career advice and mottos applicable to those working in any field, not just fashion. These are sprinkled throughout the book. Brooks is driven by ambition and this will resonate with readers who are passionate about their work.- If you enjoy photography, you'll appreciate the stunning images in this book. Brooks got her start behind the camera and has an eye for composition. Even though she isn't the photographer, she knows what will look good.- Brooks acknowledges the support she's received from mentors, and makes a point to "pay it forward" with those trying to build their careers. Good advice for us all.- Brooks has enough self assurance to include stories of her mistakes and failures, and even some unflattering pictures. The Bad:- I question the premise of a memoir from someone so young who really hasn't done anything unique (e.g. Malala can write about surviving the Taliban attack, the Cleveland hostages can write about their ordeal, etc.). This book would have been much better had Brooks either: a) included stories from the fashion world about people other than herself, or b) made this more of a career/style book.- While Brooks graciously thanks her mentors, and by all accounts has a strong work ethic, she seems obviously blind to the fact that her family's extreme wealth and connections gave her an enormous leg-up in pursuing her dream career.

As a non-fashion-y person, I picked up this book because I thought it would be humorous plus give me some tips on how to dress better or be more fashionable. It wasn't really a humorous book, and I didn't get too many fashion tips that I could apply to my daily life on a normal person's budget, but it was an interesting memoir about a woman in the fashion industry. Since I know nearly nothing about the fashion world, I found some parts of this book to be fun and interesting, and other parts to be a bit slower. I don't mean to beat a dead horse, but I don't know much about fashion. I like to look nice, but don't know the names of many designers, besides those brands that I can get at Target, Kohl's, and Macy's. That being said, I'm not sure if the author is a big name or not, but she certainly seems to have either really good luck, really good connections, or both. She had some incredible stories that you almost couldn't believe - and I don't mean that in a rude way, like I'm speculating that they aren't true. I don't doubt their authenticity at all. I just mean that some of these stories are crazy. For instance, the maître d' of her parents' favorite restaurant introduces her to a photographer she greatly admires that happens to be dining in the restaurant, and she manages to land a job with him out of it. In another instance, the person who owns the art gallery she had just sent a resume to just so happens to walk into the shoe shop she's in and starts a conversation with her. OR - better yet - she goes to a weekend wedding and sees the girlfriend of a college friend, who brings her to this great shoe shop (Christian Louboutin's).

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